UNITED NATIONS **A**

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/48/175
20 January 1994

Forty-eighth session
Agenda item 91 (f)

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/48/717/Add.7)]

48/175. Drought and desertification

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 32/172 of 19 December 1977, in which it approved the report of the United Nations Conference on Desertification, 1/ containing the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, 2/ and its subsequent resolutions on the subject,

Recalling also the decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development set forth in chapter 12, entitled "Managing fragile ecosystems: combating desertification and drought", of Agenda 21, 3/ which develop and complete the decisions contained in the Plan of Action,

Concerned about the continued world-wide degradation of soil resources, particularly in Africa,

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1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Desertification, Nairobi, 29 August-9 September 1977 (A/CONF.74/36).

2/ Ibid., part one, chap. I.

3/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol. I and Vol. I/Corr.1, Vol. II, Vol. III and Vol. III/Corr.1)) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I, Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex II.

Bearing in mind that in the long term the problems of drought, desertification and degradation of the productive capacity of the soil have serious world-wide economic and social consequences that threaten the security and well-being of all affected countries,

Stressing the importance of the ongoing negotiations to elaborate an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa,

Noting the active role played by the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office in combating drought and the important contribution of that Office to African countries in the ongoing process of negotiating an international convention to combat desertification,

Taking note of the recommendation contained in paragraph 38.27 of Agenda 21 3/ and of decision 93/33 of 18 June 1993 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme, 4/ in which the Governing Council encouraged the Administrator to strengthen the substantive role and maintain the identity of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office as the focal point within the Programme for all matters related to drought and desertification control, in particular those in Africa, in accordance with the ongoing process of integrating the Office into the core programme of the Programme,

Recalling the appeals to the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme to continue and strengthen their cooperation in combating desertification, notably through support for the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office by the joint venture programme,

Having examined the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and of the medium-term recovery and rehabilitation programme in the Sudano-Sahelian region, 5/

1. Welcomes the support of the international community and urges it to continue its financial, technical and material support to the countries most affected by drought and desertification in order to support their effort to translate the decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development into concrete activities to implement the programmes outlined in chapter 12 of Agenda 21, duly taking into account the provisions of the future international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa;

2. Takes note with satisfaction of decision 93/33 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme, in which the Governing Council decided that the experience and technical expertise of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office in drought and desertification control should be made available to all affected countries, in particular those in Africa;

4/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1993, Supplement No. 15 (E/1993/35), annex I.

5/ A/48/216-E/1993/92.

3. Recommends that the cooperation between the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme, ensured by the joint agreement to support the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office in the implementation in the Sudano-Sahelian region of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, in a manner consistent with the provisions of the future convention, be strengthened and enlarged in the context of implementing Agenda 21, but without prejudice to the particular attention that must be paid to the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region;

4. Appeals to donor countries to contribute to the United Nations fund for the Sudano-Sahelian region to allow it to continue to bring effective assistance to African countries within the framework of the negotiation process for an international convention to combat desertification and to assist the affected countries in implementing chapter 12 of Agenda 21;

5. Appeals urgently to the members of the international community, particularly donor countries, to support the effort being exerted to combat drought and desertification on affected subregional levels, inter alia, within subregional intergovernmental organizations, such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development, the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, the Southern African Development Community and the Arab Maghreb Union, as well as within the programmes, funds and relevant agencies of the United Nations system, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

86th plenary meeting
21 December 1993